

## BARK PAINTING BY ANGUS NAMPONAN OF AURUKUN

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The significance of a bark painting by Angus Namponan of Aurukun is discussed in terms of style and significance, with a commentary on the relationship of the figures in the painting to the cultural beliefs of the Aboriginal peoples of the area. Transcripts of interview between the author and artist are included for the first hand responses concerning the painting and the story it tells.

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A bark painting in the collection of the Queensland Museum (Reg.No. QE10170) (Fig. 2), was collected by Roger Hardley, of the Queensland Museum, in June 1976 and the artist was recorded as Angus Namponan (Fig. 1) of Aurukun, Cape York Peninsula.

Bark paintings are a medium introduced to Cape York Peninsula through the influence of the arts and crafts industry, and very few have been produced there or found their way into public collections. Most of those made at Aurukun in recent years have been painted by people originally from Mornington Island, where bark painting is more common. Later in this paper I discuss relationships between this painting by Namponan and other bark painting forms found elsewhere, chiefly in the Top End of the Northern Territory.

On 2 November 1990 I interviewed Angus Namponan, accompanied by Ray Wolmby, and made two field tapes (Appendix).

The painting is made up of three panels (A,B,C) which have been sketched schematically (Fig. 2). Various motifs within the panels are numbered (Fig. 2) and these are the numbers referred to below.

### PANEL A

#### SPEARING MILKFISH BY NIGHT

This is an image drawn from an important myth and related ceremonial performance which is part of the Winchenem ceremonial group's spiritual heritage. Three men (2) are spearing Milkfish (or Bonefish, known as Walkaln in Wik-Mungkan and Eeth in Wik-Elken). One has a multi-prong spear hooked up to his throwing stick, and the other two hold paddles. The outrigger canoe is shown in plan view, while the

figures in it are shown three-quarters frontally in perspective.

That they are fish-spearing at night is indicated by the man in the outrigger canoe (3) holding aloft a torch made from rolled and bound tea tree bark (1). The season is also suggested, as Wolmby points out in the taped interview, as the time when these fish are speared in this way is August to October (he gives both months). The Milkfish themselves are indicated by the typically streamlined fish forms with dark side patterning (4). In ceremonial performances by the Winchenem group, carved representations of these fish have often been used, as in the University of Queensland Anthropology Museum example illustrated in Bartlett (1989:66 (A158)), and Morphy (1981: 58, 129 (N217)). The film, *Dances of Aurukun* (AIAS 1962) also exemplifies the use of these Milkfish (Bonefish) carvings in Winchenem performance. In those carvings the side marking is a long narrow stripe, while in Namponan's painting it is a large panel covering most of the side of the fish.

The artist is not a member of the clan whose estate includes the location of the mythic events shown here, nor is he a member of this ceremonial group. His own estate is just inland from Cape Keerweer and his ceremonial group is Apelech, on which more is said below. Panels, B and C, depict mythic events at sites which belong to Apelech clans, although neither site is specifically part of Namponan's own clan country. It is worth mentioning here, that the relative political ease with which senior people in this region may relate or even perform Dreaming dramas said to 'belong' to others is distinctive. It is common practice for people to narrate myths for places over which they make no primary claims of a territorial or religious nature, so long as they are within the normal spectrum

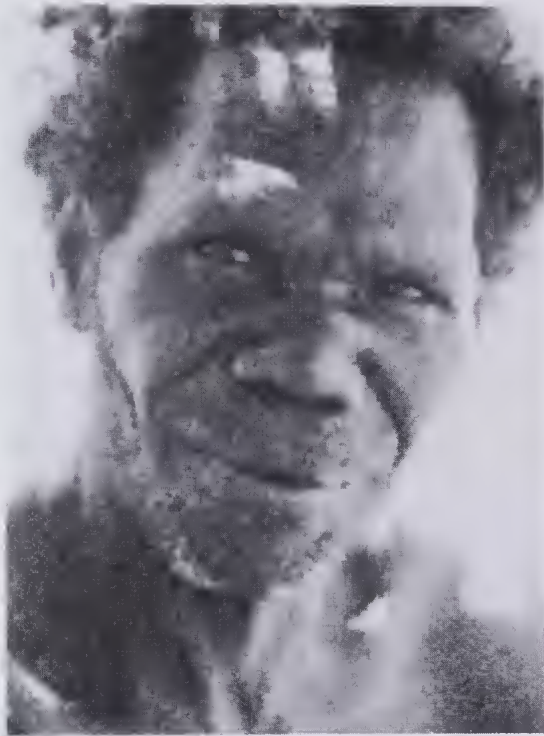


FIG. 1. Angus Namponan.

of social and territorial contact of the individual actor. This is typically accompanied by statements assigning primary rights in this knowledge to the owning groups.

The site referred to in this case is given by Namponan as Wuben (#2425), after Wolmby, by way of assistance, suggests it might be referred to as Mukiy. Mukiy is the focal site (#2387) of the estate on the Small Archer River (maps have 'Tompaten Creek') which belongs to the Pam-began/Kawangka clan. As the story place is in this estate the use of its cover-name is a reasonable way of making broad reference to the country. However, detailed field mapping with members of the relevant clan has established that the location of the totemic increase centre or 'story place' for this species is on the high bank of the Small Archer River some way upstream from the more accessible site of Wuben. At this point a freshwater spring drains into the river at low tide. This place is called Walkaln-aw (#2422), literally 'Milkfish Totemic Centre' (Further details of this site and the others referred to here are contained in Sutton et al. (1990). This is at present a restricted document.).

A version of the myth associated with this

image may be found in McConnel (1957:39-41), where she referred to the species as bony bream. She also mentioned that the key actor in the story had a younger and an older brother, which may account for the threesome depicted in Namponan's painting.

The three men (2) performing Winchenem ceremony at the bottom of panel A are the same three men (2) as depicted in the canoe. They are holding ceremonial poles characteristic of certain performance styles in the Wik-speaking area. They wear cockades of white cockatoo feathers. It is worthy of comment that they, like all the other human figures in the painting, have no ceremonial body paint, although a faint red outline around their bodies may suggest the usual covering of red ochre. Typical Winchenem body paint would in this case have been horizontal stripes about the legs and possibly also the torso.

The large half-circles (5) which form part of the borders between the panels are defined by Namponan and Wolmby as 'Winchenem dots', which are characteristically larger than those of Apelech. Namponan also refers to them as 'from on top'. This is because the clans associated with Winchenem mostly have estates in the dry sclerophyll uplands east of the coastal floodplains where the other major ceremonial groups south of the Archer have their lands (i.e., going north to south between the Archer and Christmas Creek: Apelech, Puch, Wanam). The inland countries are 'on top' and the coastal countries are 'bottom side'. This dichotomy remains the most deep-seated political and cultural cleavage within the Aurukun population.

#### PANEL B

##### MOTHER SHARK AT MAN-YELK

The second panel shows two men (8) with spears (one holding a spearthrower also) and a large shark (7). The men have feather cockades and are engaged in a ritual enactment that is based on what appears to have been a seasonal physical process as well: the removal of juvenile sharks (theelicheny) from the pregnant mother shark (kuunger) followed by the releasing of the living mother back into the waters. This is part of Apelech ceremonial performance, in which carvings of sharks are used.

The mythic reference is to the Shark totemic story complex focused on the area of Man-yelk (#233), which is the large estuary of the Kirke River just inland from Cape Keerweer. Shark is



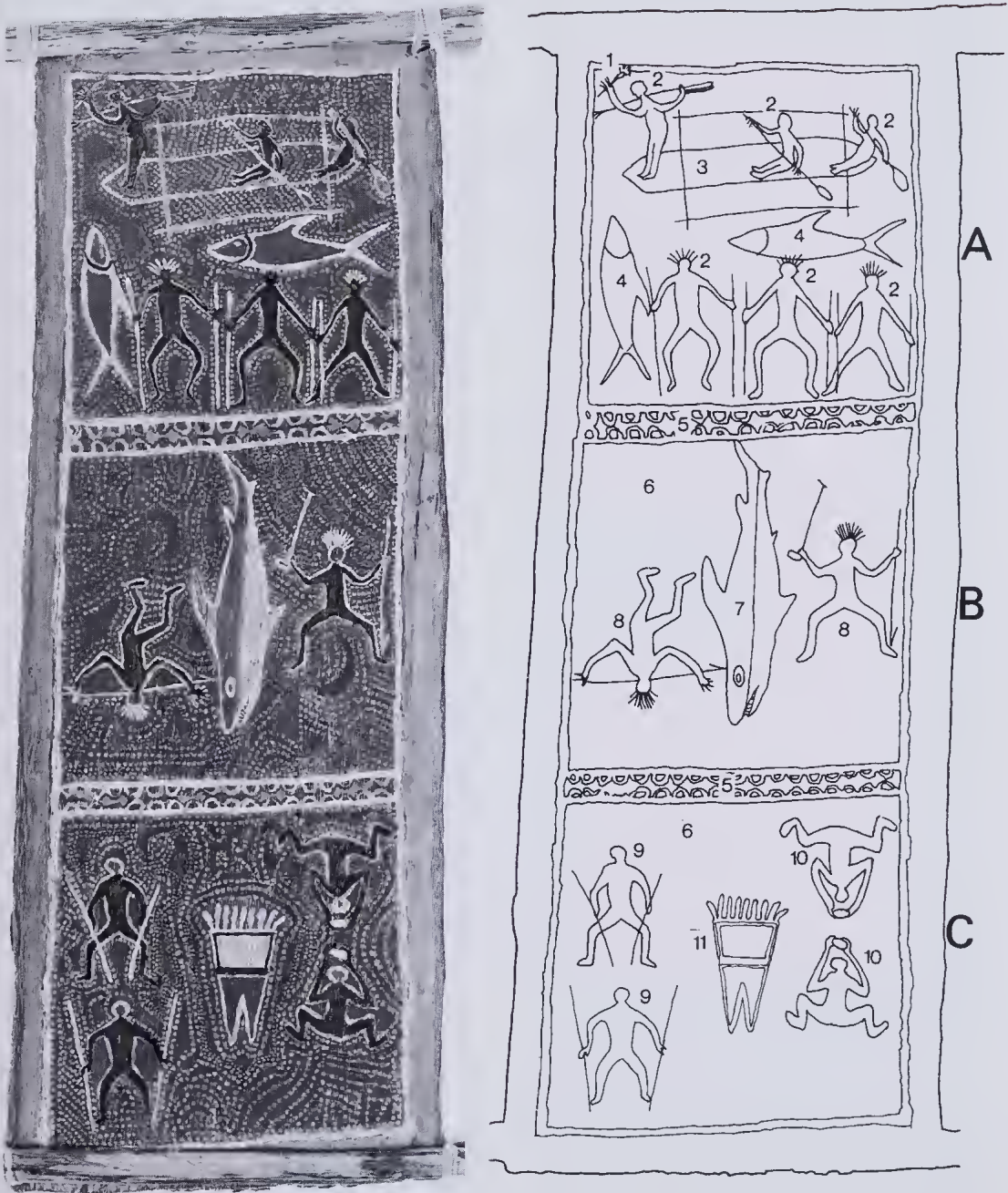


FIG. 2. Bark painting by Angus Namponan of Aurukun (left) and schematic sketch of major motifs within the painting (right) with numbers in brackets added to each individual motif for reference in the text.

a major totem of the clans whose lands surround this estuary, and the surname Wolmby, for example, is a mission spelling of the male totemic name Waalempay, '[Shark's fin] making ripples'. The Wolmby/Peemuggina clan own the Aayk estate, focused on the swamp, well and sandy living area known as Aayk (Wik-Ngathan, Wik-Elken) or Thuul (Wik-Mungkan), #85.

The dominant narrative for the Shark complex is that of the Two Young Women, Quails who at the end of the story turned into Sharks. They travelled via Iincheng (#88) and Pulthalpempang (#1), which are on the western side of the estuary, to the point where the Kirke fans out into its estuary just near the coast. One stood on the south side of the river singing her own totemic mourning song, or Wuungk, at a place called Uuk-miipeng (#91). The other sang her own, different Wuungk from a point on the opposite bank of the river at Poenp (#52), although in the details on the tape, Wolmby identifies it as Thiich (#58), which is northeast of Poenp and nearby. The name Thiich was given after much attempted remembering and I believe the consensus would be that the place was actually Poenp, which is a Shark totemic centre, a story place and an initiation ground. A published version of this story is to be found in my commentary on the Namponan/Peemiggina/Wolmby sculptures of the Two Young Women (Sutton, 1988:26–28). That volume also contains a brief biography of Namponan which I do not reproduce here.

I (Sutton, 1988) drew attention to one of the themes in this story, that of sexuality and fertility. The image of panel B is a direct reference to the ritual and economic practice of perpetuating the life of the Mother Shark while taking her young for sustenance, itself a powerful image of reproduction, conservation and revitalisation. Men would spear the pregnant sharks with blunt spears (uucheng pelpen), said to have 'no barb' (although those in the painting appear to have a single barb). They would roll her over, cause her to miscarry by kicking, extract the young via the cloaca, 'throwing out the blood', and then turn her over. They would sing Wuungk (mourning songs) as they did this, once, then twice - she would start to move - then thrice, and she would swim away alive. The mother shark was not killed, as she was sacred in this state. The meat of the juvenile sharks was by law meat for all ages and both genders (minh kaangketh), something that had to be shared, otherwise there would be 'spear talk'.

This Shark complex is vital to the Apelech mythic and ceremonial cycle that extends geographically from just south of Archer River to between the Knox and Kendall Rivers in coastal western Cape York Peninsula. (For published material on this cycle see Sutton (1987:84)). The fine dotting (6) is said to be Apelech dotting. At first, Namponan said he only added the fine dots for decorative effect (yaay 'for no deep reason', to 'flashim'), but then on second thoughts moved into an explanation of the symbolism of the dots that closely parallels that given in Sutton (1988:28–29). He said that the dots refer to the ceremony called Apelech [literally 'Clear (of Water)'], as they do also to the clarification of the salt waters of the coast and estuaries after the wet season sediments have settled and a big saltwater tide has come up. Wolmby, making the reference narrower, adds that Namponan's dots in panel B 'are dots for Mother Shark'. The shimmering brilliance conveyed by this fine dotting is a metaphor of spiritual power and life-giving forces.

#### PANEL C

##### TWO THIRSTY SPIRITS AT MOOLENCH

Two male spirit-images (9) are shown dancing Apelech ceremony, holding ceremonial poles. They have just been ritually sent, as spirit-images of the deceased are still sent soon after a death, to a site in the area just south of Cape Keerweer. There they encounter two women (10) who are sitting squeezing the white fluid out of the flesh of stingrays - the species are given as the flat-tailed ray, whip-tailed ray, and file stingray. The white objects in their hands are the lumps of stingray flesh. The women are sitting, but as they are shown with legs apart their sexuality is probably being indicated. They are said to be very attractive.

The location of the myth is a well, depicted by the geometric form in the centre (11). This form contains the triangular base designs so distinctive of the painting tradition of this area. (The use of triangles is rare in traditional Aboriginal art, the other main area where they are found being northeast Arnhem Land. In both cases, long-established foreign artistic influence - in Arnhem Land from the Macassans, here from Torres Strait - is probably the origin.) The name of the site is given in this case as Thum-merriy (#147), a site which in the 1970s was assigned jointly to the Gothachalkenin/Landis/Eundatumweakin clan and the northern Yunkaporta clan, whose



estates respectively largely lie south and north of here. (Details of locations are in Sutton et al., 1990) This is a well-known site name and refers to what was once a major residential base camp. The details given by Namponan and Wolmby in this case, however, suggest that while this is a useful cover-term for the area the location of the story is actually Moolench (#2179). This is an extremely dangerous place where a monster called Wuthelpal (also Nguthelpal) lives, a huge snake-like being with a mane of long hair and feathers, resembling a 'lion'. A carved and painted representation of Wuthelpal, by Francis Yunkaporta, is in the possession of David Martin of Canberra. The late Noel Peemuggina and the late Charlie Yunkaporta are said to have actually seen this monster in this area. On the tape the site is said to be near the Moving Stone (#881=2146), a place of major spiritual importance in the region and claimed by northern Yunkaportas.

The site also has water fairies and several totemic centres (for Barramundi, Bandicoot, Clear Saltwater [Ngak Apelech], and Red Anus). Its scrub is a place where one cannot dig for turkey eggs. If you do, you will get leprosy, and the sores on your arms will swell up like measles if you do this. Its ritual danger acted as a shield for Billy Wildfellow, deceased progenitor of all living members of the Gothachalkenin/Landis/Eundatumweakin clan, as he would go here to hide after killing someone or stealing a woman. While both Namponan and Wolmby assign ownership of the site to northern Yunkaportas, it is also claimed (not without dispute) by descendants of Billy Wildfellow, one of whom is Wolmby's wife. During the taped discussion he inserts mention of their claims.

In the story as given by Namponan and Wolmby, the two men approached the working women and asked for water from the well. They gave water to the men, who washed their mouths and then drank. The men demanded more water, which they received, then more and more water. The women continued to give them water from the well next to the swamp. The day wore on, the sun was setting, and still the men demanded and received water. The level of water in the well was getting low. The woman who had been doing the talking finally refused to give any more, and left, going to Warpang (#114), which is north of the well site and in Namponan's own clan country. The women told the men that the well site was to be theirs, and went back north to Warpang - a sequence which implies a dissociation of land

interests of the two clans Namponan/Karntin and northern Yunkaporta. (Members of these clans are, if in the same putative generation, parallel classificatory cousins.) The women were afraid that the men might come and attack them during the night, and they heard the men singing Apelech songs. 'Ah, who are those spirits?' they asked.

The story as given on the tape is rather fragmentary and I had difficulty in translating parts of it, which are mostly in a language I do not know well (Wik-Elken). Further clarification could be obtained if a fuller version of this myth could be recorded and accurately translated.

## DISCUSSION

Although Percy Trezise is said to have tried to introduce bark painting to Aurukun in the early 1970s, and odd examples mainly painted by Mornington Islanders resident at Aurukun do appear among works coming out of Aurukun from time to time, the medium has never become a common one in the region. Namponan's own preferred medium is wood carving, and he regularly carves crocodiles for sale (unpainted) and sacred sculptures for house-opening ceremonies, such as those illustrated in Sutton (1988:26). Namponan is locally recognised as a specialist artist and his son Gary has produced many drawings and some paintings for sale or for book illustrations. Gary Namponan spent some time at Batchelor, NT, training in visual arts techniques. The Namponan family are the main participants in the AIATSIS film *Familial Places* by David and Judith MacDougall.

The painting is characterised by those features often said to be very typical of bark paintings in the Northern Territory: symmetry, fineness of execution, a contrast between solid primary motifs and a detailed infill, and a 'quotative' approach to the representation of sacred myth in the sense that only one or two episodes from a story are shown, thus implying the rest of the story.

Some of what makes this work distinctive stylistically within Aboriginal Australia lies in the partial use of perspective, and in the linear approach to dotting. Some of this dotting describes triangular forms and tendril-like hooks that are unusual in the Aboriginal classical tradition, although there are echoes elsewhere (such as the diamonds of northeast Arnhem Land and the paisleys of Ernabella). The dotting generally appears to have been begun in parallel to the

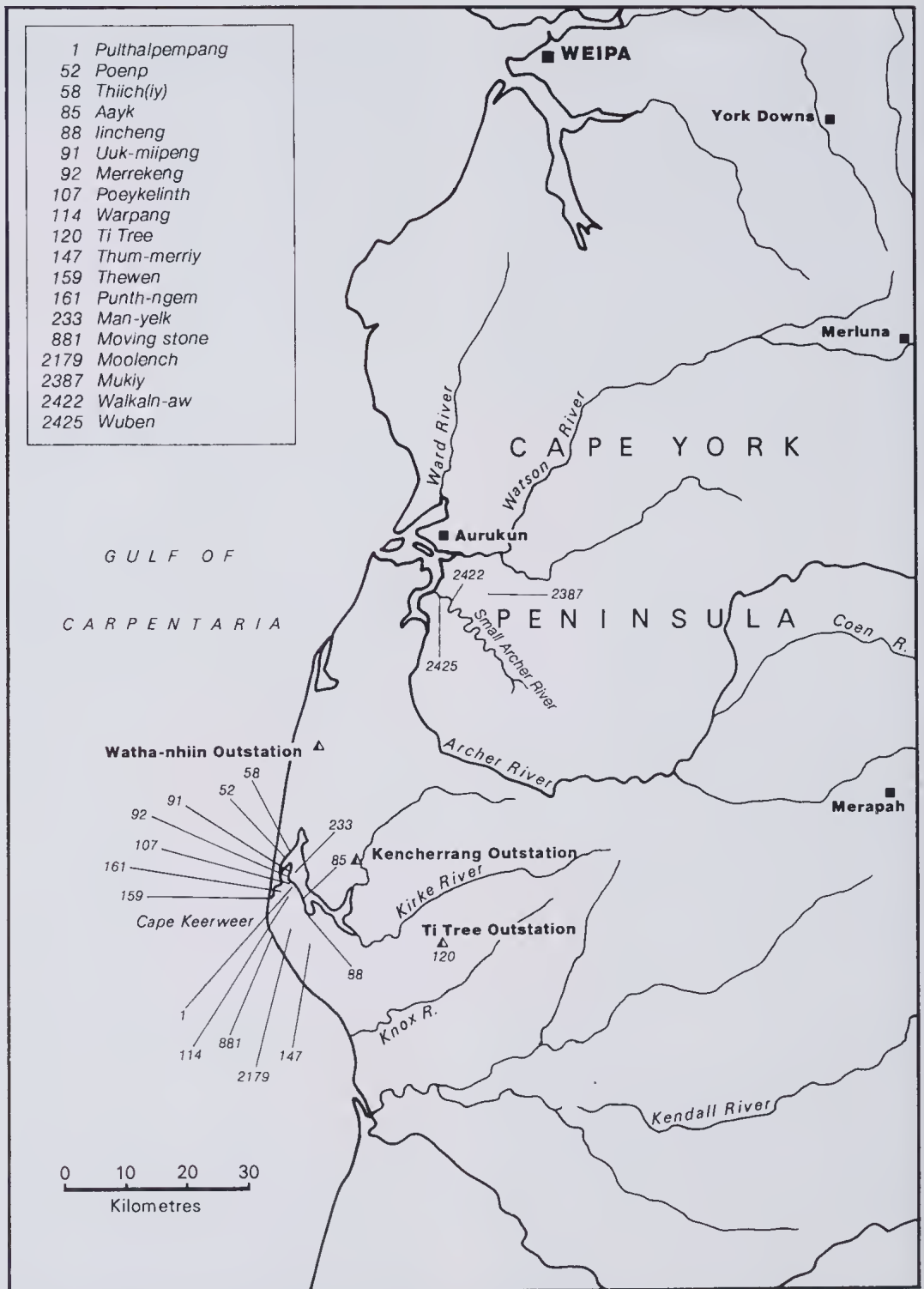


FIG. 3. Map of area showing sites mentioned in text in the Aurukun to Cape Keerweer area..

envelope of each primary motif, in this sense reminding one of the multiple parallel outlines of focal motifs in much art of Papua New Guinea.

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### APPENDIX

#### NAMPONAN BARK PAINTING: SUMMARY TRANSLATION OF FIELD TAPES

On 2 November 1990, at Aurukun, Cape York Peninsula, I interviewed Angus Namponan, accompanied by Ray Wolmby, and made two field tapes (nos. 254 & 255). The relevant field notes are PS Book 65:201–202. Angus Namponan is speaking Wik-Elken (= Wik-Ngatharr) and English; Ray Wolmby and Peter Sutton are speaking Wik-Ngathan, some Wik-Elken, and English.

To understand the pronominal, kin and country references the reader should know that Namponan is married to a woman of the Wolmby/Peemuggina clan whose country is focused around Aayk on the Kirke River estuary, and that this woman is a parallel cousin and clan 'sister' of Ray Wolmby and Peter Sutton. Peter Sutton was taken as a son by Ray Wolmby's father's brother, and the two are therefore parallel cousins and clan brothers. For this reason Namponan calls both of them brother in law as well as cousin (in Aboriginal English, *bandji*, originally from the colloquial 'fancy [man]', hence sometimes *bandjiman*). His wife is a Peemuggina (Wolmby). Namponan's clan estate adjoins that of the Wolmby/Peemuggina clan on

the northeast and both belong to the Apelech ceremonial group and the Cape Keerweer political spectrum. His mother's estate was focused on a place called *lincheng*, whose chief patrilineal inheritors have effectively abandoned it in favour of *Kenchrrang* area. The *lincheng* estate adjoins both his own and that of Ray Wolmby, and its future tenancy is often under discussion, as in a veiled way it is here. Furthermore, to understand why Wolmby refers to the focal site of panel C as belonging to the *Gothachalkcnin/Landis/Eundatumweakin* clan when Namponan refers to it as belonging to the northern *Yunkaportas*, one must know that those two clans have conjoint interests at or near the site as it is close to the edges of both estates. One also has to know that Wolmby's wife is a *Landis*, and not to insert a word on behalf of their interests would contravene the principle of in-law respect which is otherwise so clearly evident in the formality of speech in this conversation.

Please note that what follows is partly translation, partly summary, and partly verbatim transcript. Spelling conventions are slightly different from those described in *Aak*, in which the dot represents the unstressed vowel schwa. Here and elsewhere in this paper schwa is represented by /e/. There are thus two values for the letter /e/: in an initial syllable, or the first syllable in a hyphenated word, it has something like the value of /e/ in English 'bet'. Elsewhere it has the neutral value of /e/ in English 'ashes'. Doubled letters represent long vowels. The digraph /oe/ (long: /ooe/) represents a high to mid central lightly rounded vowel like French /eu/, /th/ is a tense lamino-interdental stop, /ch/ is a tense lamino-palatal stop, /nh/ is a lamino-interdental nasal, /ny/ is a lamino-palatal nasal, /ng/ is a dorso-velar nasal, /r/ is a rhotic glide, /rr/ is a rhotic flap/trill, and /' / is a glottal stop. Other values are as in the International Phonetic Alphabet. AN is Angus Namponan, RW is Ray Wolmby, and PS is Peter Sutton.

TAPE 254 [TRACK 2, last few minutes only]

PS: Draws attention to tripartite structure of image, to suggest dealing with one at a time.

RW: Panel B: This Shark is the Mother Thing [avoidance of ordinary word for meat, typical of reverence for totemic references].

AN: Panel A: This is a torch meat [i.e. a fish speared at night by torchlight], these are Milkfish (*minh ceth*), this one here, a meat of the night, as barramundi is also. Spearing night-time.



PS: Where is that place?

AN: This place is on Small Archer River [the 'Tompaten Creek' of standard maps]. The three men, after having gone torch spearing, then danced ceremony.

PS: What are they dancing bandji?

AN: They were not dancing Apelech, but Winchenem.

PS: What is the name of that place?

RW: Say Mukiy.

AN: Mukiy no way, no way, no way. It is called a totemic centre for that animal, an 'aw' in Wik-Mungkan. This same species, this Bonefish, its totemic centre is up east here. Wuben; not Wobeb. That is the Milkfish [= Bonefish] totemic centre, and it is theirs [oblique reference to Pambegan clan].

#### PANEL B:

AN: But this one here is different, it is ours (1 plural incl.); the story about that other one is finished. Our story here is different, it is Apelech, this Shark here (Kuunger), and the country is Aayk.

RW: Kuunger, that Mother Shark. It comes from our (1 dual incl.) country, Iincheng, Iincheng...

AN: The country is Aayk, what we call Man-yelk, the whole place, it's Man-yelk.

PS: All in one?

AN: East/west, north/south, it's all Man-yelk. It's that open place where you [PS] and we camped at one time [in 1977, at the time Familiar Places was filmed]. It's Man-yelk. Two men are dancing Apelech. That big mother Shark, they use spears with ....

END TAPE 254

#### TAPE 255 TRACK 1:

PS: Sorry, bandji, can you just start that story again?

AN: They spear the Mother Shark with kalk pelpen, also called uucheng pelpen, with no barb. They kick her about the genital area, while she is belly up. They throw out the blood, grab them by the lower parts, take out the baby sharks (at the stage known as little theelicheny). They never killed the Mother, never, she is sacred ([surrounded by] hard taboos), because she is the Mother Shark. Later [i.e. in living memory] it was exactly the same. They kept the babies. But men did not kill the Mother, that's very sacred.

RW: Brother in law, excuse me, it's like this: they would sing Wuungk [site-specific mourn-

ing song largely controlled by women] in our (1 dual incl.) language ...

AN: Yes, they sang Wuungk those two [Quail Women], you [PS] know how to sing that Wuungk, you have been singing that Wuungk. This one now [i.e. men would sing Wuungk relating to the sites Uuk-miipeng and Poenp] over the Mother Shark on the shore. The Shark would then get up. The old people [= ancestors, forebears] would be watching, as the Shark thrashed its tail (pubpubpub), watching, then: 'It's going now'. A little bit more then: 'OK, she's all right now'. The Mother was never killed, no way, very sacred. [Note: /pub!/ is the ending of one of the Shark Wuungk songs, and is a regular ideophone specifically denoting a shark's tail threshing water.]

RW: Very sacred.

PS: Too true.

AN: The baby sharks were pulled from her belly [euphemism], from her womb [English term used, avoidance of Aboriginal anatomical term between in-laws]. They would keep on pulling them out. Then they would 'tie them up' [a cryptic reference to processing by singeing the skin, shredding the meat, leaching the milky liquid out of it, then enclosing the liver in the meat and tying the whole into a paperbark bundle to be set by the fire to re-heat]. Then they would eat. This was minh kaangketh, meat for everyone - not just a few people would eat it, the whole family would eat it around there. That's how it was.

RW: Yes, minh kaangketh, that means every person got to share, otherwise that one is spear talk brother. That's a word belonging to that tribe of you and me, belonging to that place. Of our ancestors from there. It's different, unique. If brother in law talk I respect him ...[?].

#### PANEL C:

AN: The other one [panel], I took it [story] from further that way, south [i.e. south of Man-yelk], brother Sydney's and Clive's family, Francis and Bruce, this is their story [i.e. a story of a site belonging to northern Yunkaportas from Moving Stone area just south of Cape Keerweer]. This is a story about a person's spirit image. Those ones were different, about real people, but this one is about spirits. From there, where did they come from, before? Well, before, people would rise in anger, like, they would go and camp out and look around to check on what people were doing and then do something in return to them [simulation of



revenge expeditions is implied]. Like that. These two gave a hiding to ...[?]

RW: Younger brother, it's like this: [refers to our country Thewen [i.e. the mouth of the Kirke River, in which Wolmbys have a strong interest]...]

AN: This one here we are talking about, the last one.

PS: What is this [refers to geometric object in centre]?

AN: What is this? It's a well. RW: It's a well, it belongs to those cousins of ours [i.e. northern Yunkaportas and, probably, Landises].

PS: The name of this place?

AN: There, where is it...

RW: Thum-merrriy, isn't it?

AN: Thum-merrriy, Thum-merrriy, Thum-merrriy [my information is that it is Moolench, not far away but different, PS].

PS: Is that a sorcery well or not?

AN: That well is a swamp at a poison ground. Only senior people can go there, not young people or just anybody. Only the senior people know the footroad on which to go into this well.

RW: Excuse me bandji, can I chop your word there. Brother please, I tell you: that same story there, that's a place where one can't dig for scrub turkey eggs (minh thoycken), or for long yams (may kuth), and if you do you'll get leprosy. I'm telling you it's a sacred and tabooed place.

PS: It's Thum-merrriy is it, and not Moolench?

RW: Sacred place.

PS: And these two are women eh?

AN: Not men, two 'things' [avoidance of word for women (pu'eth), which contains the stem 'vagina', inappropriate between brothers in law]. Those two [women] were squeezing the flesh of flat-tailed stingray (minh yuumel). Whip-tailed stingray (wengeny), flat-tailed stingray and file stingray (punyp) they were squeezing, that morning.

RW: Tell brother they were squeezing it in the scrub.

AN: Not inside the scrub, because that's a forbidden place, a poison ground. Have you seen the Moving Stone? The scrub lies near there, and they were squeezing the meat just outside the scrub. These two man spirit images were sent there with Apelech ceremony. They were dancing Apelech holding those sticks. Where might they have been dancing?

RW: My cousin, now see here my brother in law: This Wuthelpal is there. The one we call Wuthelpal is there, at their country. It's like a

big snake like that tree you see there. Our deceased father's 'older brother' [actually father's younger parallel cousin, but respect form dictates use of senior category if deceased], the father of Peter [Peemuggina, i.e. Noel Pcemuggina], he saw it. The one we call Wuthelpal.

AN: A huge snake, but with feathers.

RW: With feathers. In the morning he blows just like a siren. Waaaaaaa! Like that he calls. It's in the country of our deceased mother's older brother in the south there, and of our cousins [the deceased uncle is probably Charlie Yunkaporta]. That's the country of Luke, Geofrey and Cora [nee Yunkaporta].

AN: Yes, these two were squeezing meat. The two spirit men saw them. These were spirits, but the women were real people. Those white things in their hands are the meat they were squeezing. They said to the women: 'Hey, fetch water for us, give us water, we are thirsty.' One woman said: 'Wait you two, I will find some.' The spirit man's mate ran away frightened. 'Ghosts came upon us!' They found water for the two spirit men, who washed their mouths. They drank and drank. 'Fetch more water!' the two spirits said. More water was fetched from the well. There is a swamp there, a lagoon. They drank. More was given to them. 'No, fetch more! We're not satisfied yet.' They fetched more. 'Oh, this is going on a long time', one of the [?women] said. The sun was going down and the two were wanting to go. The water was getting smaller. 'I won't fetch any more water for you two'. She went back to - where is that place?

RW: Warpang.

AN: Ah yes, Warpang, they went there, right through.

PS: Those two...?

AN: No, this one went first, the other one ?gave more water to the spirits: 'Finished here eh?'

PS: The two women?

AN: No, men.

PS: The two men ran away to Warpang eh?

RW: Those two returned north to Warpang. 'Oh this is too long' they said. 'This is your water here, you stay here.' Those two then went back north to Warpang. Their country is there. Luke, Cora and the others, it is theirs, they returned to it.

AN: The two [women] spoke in fear: 'Those spirits might come and find us tonight. They might attack us, hit us.' Those two heard the

spirit men singing Apelech songs. 'Ah, who are these spirits?'

PS: What is yoypeng?

RW: Koethoeth [spirit]. It's Big Language of ours (1 dual incl.).

AN: It's a newly sent spirit, sent with Wuungk singing.

RW: We call it koethoeth, and also yoypeng - Big Language, Wikmuneas' language has it also ...

PS: What are all those small dots?

AN: That's nothing really [yaaya], I just did that to make it look attractive ['flashim'].

RW: Younger brother, I just want to [yaaya] smoke a little tobacco. PS: Mm [assent].

AN: [reconsidering the last question:] What are the dots? These little dots here are Apelech. Like in the sea too, bandji, this water, like at the first during March or June/July the Clear Water has not yet come. Then there is a big tide and a very heavy saltwater tide rises up. That is when Apelech [Clear Water] then rises up.

RW: Younger brother, listen to this please. Look at this dot here, their language, cousin Angus's group [...], in their language, minh eeth [Milkfish]. June, July, August, September, then October, that is the time for these Milkfish. Look here, October month. This one here is December month, minh kuunger [Mother Shark reproducing], these dots here of our cousin's, are dots for Mother Shark. Mother Shark is pregnant October/November before she gives birth to them. Those are those dots you see of our [cousin]. Here on top the dots are of [Small] Archer [River], theirs [Pambegans']. Have you not seen, January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, then it is time for that fish, August month.

AN: January, February, March, April, May, June, July. [Note: this recitation is a way of remembering the last month mentioned, usually.]

RW: Same month that Story there brother, that dot there on top. This one thaperem [?Shark] here is October month. The Mother is pregnant, before she sends forth her children. But our (1 du incl) ancestors, those others [...] used to grab the tail, turn her over (?) - cousin can tell you. And those deceased mother's brothers also did it. [I.e. Namponan's male forebears are

included, not just Wolmbys, hunting on the same shores.]

PS: What about this one here [motif 5]? Circle eh?

RW: Cousin will tell you.

AN: This is exclusively theirs, these large circles, from on top. East - like, what, they're Winchenem dots, very large ones. But Apelech has small dots. One of these Stories belongs to Winchenem, this one here: canoe, these fish, three persons. These are the same three persons here in the canoe [and dancing below]. They are dancing an important [ritually 'Big'] meat. One is holding a light in his hand, and a spear.

PS: Paperbark eh?

AN: Yes, a paperbark torch.

RW: Cousin, can I talk?

[RW then tells long story in Wik-Ngathan about the two women in the lower image (panel C), but gives location of events as in the area of Ti Tree Lagoon [site 120] well inland. This is not the subject of the painting, and as the story comes from someone other than the artist I have not transcribed it in detail here.

Also the story about the Two Young Women of Cape Keerweer, begun as track ends.]

## TRACK 2

Continuation of Two Young Women story by RW. Details are essentially the same as the version in Sutton (1988:27-28), and not transcribed here.

RW: Dwells again on panel B, refers to country of Gothachalkenin/Landis/Eundatumweakin clan and the danger place where one cannot dig for turkey eggs. The sores swell up like measles if you do this. Place is next door to northern Yunkaportas' country.

RW: [Tells a Crocodile story about the places called Poeykelinhth [107] and Punhth-ngem [161/2527]. Not relevant to the painting so not translated here.]

AN: Later I'll do some other paintings like this, with stories.

RW: [Tells 'Dreamtime' story about the place Iincheng [88] and the catching of many Catfish (Minh Ka'ey species). Not directly relevant to the painting so not translated here.]

RW: [Tells another story re Crippled Man near Uuk-Miipeng [91], Merrekeng [92]. Not relevant to the painting so not translated here.]

END TAPE